

than once. A right for which the three Hebrew children gladly entered the seven times heated furnace of fire, a right for which Daniel leaped into the midst of the gaping jaws of hungry lions, a right for which countless thousands in order to maintain, surrendered their lives at the stake, upon the horns of savage bulls, between the foaming jaws of all manner of wild beasts—a right which has been purchased and freely given to you, at the cost of more priceless treasure than any other privilege you enjoy today. For this, "Be ye thankful."

Thank God, also, for the temporal blessings he has bestowed upon you. But perhaps disaster, and not temporal prosperity has been yours. Still, "in all things, give thanks." The prime minister of England to King George III., once desired to set apart a day of Thanksgiving to God, whereupon King George began to enumerate his troubles, and ended by saying, "Ah, tell me, what have I to be thankful for?" "You can be thankful that things are no worse," was the quick reply. If only a little cabin is yours, perhaps you can be thankful that it is *your* cabin. If only a many-patched coat is yours, perhaps you can be thankful that it is a *clean* and warm coat. If the burden on the back is heavy to bear, perhaps, you can be thankful that a burden is not crushing your heart. Look about you—look! What do you see? A thousand hearts with less of cheer and more of sorrow. Then for what is in thine hand, "Be ye thankful."

Thank God for the blessing of health. "But," you say, "not I. Pain and sickness have been my constant companions." Still, "Be ye thankful." If the tempests of financial ruin have swept over us, or if the piercing blasts of bodily affliction have cut us thru, may we not still be able to shout with Job, the old patriarch of patience, "Bless the Lord!" And truly, never had Job more to be thankful for than when he had least. A friend once visited that man of God, Dr. Payson, as he laid on the bed of affliction, and said to him, "Well, Doctor, I am sorry to see you still on your back." "Sorry!" exclaimed Payson, "Sorry, are you? But do you know why God puts a fellow on his back?" "No, I can't say I do." "Well," said Dr. Payson, "He puts him there so he can more easily look *upward*." Amen! Even so! "Be ye thankful."

Thank God for the talent, the wealth, or the position among men,—enabling you to do much good—that He has given you. But none of these are yours. And you are only an ordinary man among ordinary men. Thank God then, that you are not an extraordinary man; for verily, you have much reason to be thankful.

Abderrahman III, the most magnificent sultan of Spain, reigning over a half century when Spain glittered and dazzled in resplendent glory,—Abderrahman III, whose body guard was one thousand horsemen with cimeters and belts studded with pure gold,—after fifty one years of life *Extraordinary*, declar-

ed that in it all he could "count only fourteen happy days!" "O, man," said he, "put not thy trust in this present world."

I entered one day a palatial mansion. The faces I saw were as cold and hard as the marble in its walls. Now and then a faint smile would play upon a face there, only to deepen the lines of sadness. I arose and went forth in that mansion in quest of one suggestion of pure untrammelled joy. I trod over royal carpets, stumbled over the costliest rugs, fumbled about amid priceless treasures, on wall and on floor, but found it not. Finally upon a gorgeously tapestried wall, I beheld a strange contrast,—a picture which immediately carried me away, far away from the temples of the great city, to a little low thatched cottage on a hillside. The sun was sinking slowly behind the cloud capped hills, as slowly o'er a summit came plodding a shepherd, whistling and plodding along with his noble dog, following his flock of snowy-white lambs to their fold. Out from the little kitchen, sweet and clean, perfumed by the simple but delicious steaming viands of the poor, ran a sweet faced "wife." Her hair untouched by the hot, deadening fingers of fashion, flowed like a stream of purest gold down over her shoulders. On she ran with out stretched arms glowing whiter, and rosy lips, burning rosier, while the smiling eyes of her laddie, glowed and sparkled as he awaited his pure bliss. Bringing up the rear of four, came a little tot, sweet as if just dropped from Heaven, her little lips protruding, as much as to say, "Me want to tiss my papa, too." The lowing cattle, the neighing horses, the frolicsome kittens, the cooing doves, the leaping streams all seemed to join in the delight that surrounds the close of a well-spent day. As I beheld it all, I said, And what shall I name it? Purity? Joy? Peace? Bliss? Happiness? Contentment? Paradise? Love? Heaven? or all of these? A still mysterious voice said within me, "only a Dream in a Palace!" I walked away, out into the pure fresh air, out into the street, for lo! No place had I there,—no palace had I, no royal rugs, no tapestried walls, no hoard of treasures, no vessel of gold no glittering stone! Again the still small voice replied, "But *more*, a cot, a Love, and a dew-drop from Heaven! 'Be ye thankful.'"

Philadelphia, Pa.

THE REAL THANKSGIVING

J. ALLEN MILLER

In the Babylonian Talmud we read a story of a traveller who one day chanced upon an old man planting a carob tree. "How long will it be until this tree becomes fruitful?" "Seventy years," replied the old man. "Do you then expect to live seventy years and to eat of the fruit?" "When I entered the world," was the answer, "I found carob trees in abundance. Even as my fathers planted for me, in like manner shall I also plant for those that are to come after me." In the carob tree that the old man planted he left a beautiful memorial of his gratitude.

This old story of the Rabbis illustrates the thought I wish to emphasize. In whatever way we may express our gratitude for the blessings received there is none other so real and true, so beautiful and lasting as *doing something for others*.

How rich was the world when we came into it! What wealth the ages of the past bequeathed to us! What music of enraptured souls! What eloquence of lofty ideals and high living! What inspiration of heroic example! What crosses of unutterable suffering with what crowns of ever increasing glory! And shall we receive this splendid heritage from the past, wasting it as prodigals in selfish enjoyment, with ingratitude? God forbid.

Rather let us strive to make the world better and happier. Because we have lived and toiled and passed away may the world be richer!

How *rich* was the home into which we were born! Think of the *mother-love* that was there! The depth of the valley thru which she passed in the secret of her own soul: its darkness was all forgotten in the joy of the new life that came to be. And all the cost of years of tenderest care is never charged against us. Oh, the boundlessness of *mother-love*! And how shall we requite it? Be grateful? How? Many a debt is often paid in the debased coin of an empty "Thank you!" How angels in heaven must weep pitying tears over the scenes enacted by ungrateful sons and daughters.

What untold blessings the Son of God brought to us! What wonderful words of promise of endless blessedness fell from his lips! How matchless and inspiring the example of life he set for us! How touchingly tender and pathetic is the whole story of his life breathed out upon the Cross in our behalf. Our blessed Redeemer! How we love him! We give thanks in thought and word to God our Father for this unspeakable gift. We give expression to our gratitude best of all when we do as he himself suggests in these surprising words:

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or athirst, and gave thee drink? And when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? And when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me." Matt. 25:34-40.

And these words of the Master suggest the real way of giving thanks.